

UO COMICS & CARTOON STUDIES PRESENTS

# ART DUCKO



VOLUME I

ISSUE II

# ART DUCKO SENIOR STAFF



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

ARTWORK BY LARA KIM HIGGINS

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LORD COMMANDER OF  
THE EVENT'S WATCH

**ALEC TOPKIS**  
BROTHER OF THE  
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**DAVID CROSS**  
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ASUO  
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# Retrograde

First Phase

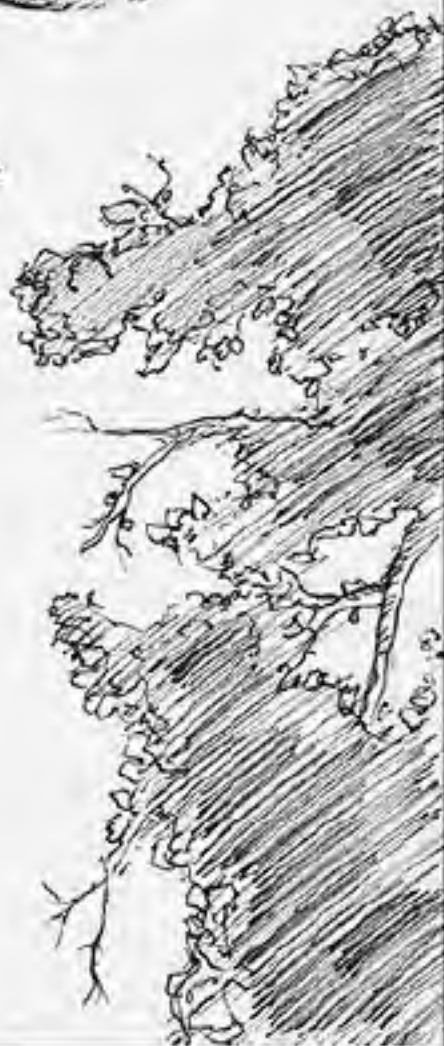


Written by Emily Volk  
Illustrated by Ethan Oulmot



YOU'LL WAIT A LONG, LONG TIME FOR ANYTHING MUCH  
TO HAPPEN IN HEAVEN BEYOND THE FLOATS OF CLOUD  
AND THE NORTHERN LIGHTS THAT RUN LIKE TINGLING NERVES.  
THE SUN AND MOON GET CROSSED, BUT THEY NEVER TOUCH,  
NOR STRIKE OUT FIRE FROM EACH OTHER NOR CRASH OUT LOUD  
THE PLANETS SEEM TO INTERFERE IN THEIR CURVES  
BUT NOTHING EVER HAPPENS, NO HARM IS DONE.  
WE MAY AS WELL GO PATIENTLY ON WITH OUR LIFE,  
AND LOOK ELSEWHERE THAN TO STARS AND MOON AND SUN  
FOR THE SHOCKS AND CHANGES WE NEED TO KEEP US SANE.  
IT IS TRUE THE LONGEST DROUGHT WILL END IN RAIN,  
THE LONGEST PEACE IN CHINA WILL END IN STRIFE.  
STILL IT WOULDN'T REWARD THE WATCHER TO STAY AWAKE  
IN HOPES OF SEEING THE CALM OF HEAVEN BREAK  
ON HIS PARTICULAR TIME AND PERSONAL SIGHT.  
THAT CALM SEEMS CERTAINLY SAFE TO LAST TONIGHT.

ROBERT FROST











STD NORAH? NORAH DUBOIS?

Family Planning



GOOD NEWS, MY DEAR, TEST IS BACK AND YOU'RE NOT PREGNANT. THERE WEREN'T ANY SIGNS OF... FORCE EITHER. YOU SAID YOU COULDN'T REMEMBER ANYTHING FROM THAT NIGHT?

NO, I... I HAD BEEN DRINKING. I DIDN'T THINK I DRANK THAT MUCH. I DON'T REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED.

IS THERE A POSSIBILITY OF SOMEONE SLIPPING ANYTHING INTO YOUR DRINK?

Family Planning

NO.  
I MEAN...  
I'M NOT SURE.  
MAYBE.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU. BUT YOU'RE GOING TO BE OKAY.

Planning



SO WHAT'RE YOU SAYING THEN?

I DON'T KNOW. I JUST DON'T WANT  
TO DO THIS ANYMORE. I CAN'T.

DO WHAT? YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WANTED  
TO TAKE IT SLOW- NEVER LABEL THINGS.  
YOU SAID IT WAS JUST FOR FUN.

IT'S NOT FUN ANYMORE.

JESUS, IT'S BEEN 3 YEARS OF THIS NO RULES  
BULLSHIT- AND YOU'RE JUST GOING TO  
LEAVE IT AT "IT'S NOT FUN ANYMORE"?  
WHY IS THIS SO SIMPLE FOR YOU?

SIMPLE?!

SIMPLE! YOU'RE SIMPLE. YOU'RE SIMPLY  
COMPLICATED.

THAT'S AN OXYMORON.

"CLUNK"

SO ARE YOU.

GOODBYE, NORAH.

THE THING ABOUT SAM WAS HE POURED  
HIMSELF INTO EVERYTHING HE TOUCHED. HIS  
WORK. HIS FRIENDS... FAMILY. EVERYTHING.  
HE POURED HIMSELF INTO ME.

LIKE POURING WINE INTO A CRACKED GLASS..



# EXPLORING TRAGEDY THROUGH COMICS

AN ANALYSIS OF ART SPIEGELMAN'S MAUS

ERICA LAMBRIGHT

How does one tell a story about the Holocaust, a catastrophic period of human history, in a relatable way? In the 1980s, Art Spiegelman did exactly that using the comic form. His two-part Pulitzer Prize-winning graphic memoir, *Maus*, is a tragic story about his father's experience during the Holocaust. The story in *Maus* is told with an animal allegory, where the Jewish people are drawn as mice, the Germans as cats, the Americans as dogs, and the Poles as pigs. *Maus* has been incredibly well-received, and has been called "the most affecting and successful narrative ever done about the Holocaust" by *The Wall Street Journal*.

Why is Spiegelman's use of the comic form so effective in telling the story of the Holocaust? In *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art*, Scott McCloud describes a theory of how the comic form can communicate so effectively, calling it

"viewer-identification." This theory states that the less realistic a drawing is, the easier it is for the reader to identify with it. It seems contradictory -- shouldn't more realistic drawings be more relatable to us? Think about when you see a photograph from the Holocaust. Piles of bodies. Fingernail claw marks on the walls of gas chambers. Malnourished, beaten down prisoners -- it's terrifying to think about. While these photos are real in every way, they can be overwhelming and hard to comprehend.

According to McCloud, "When we *abstract* an image through *cartooning*, we're not so much *eliminating* details as we are *focusing on specific details*" (30), which means that realistic images are actually harder to relate to than more basic drawings. For example, when you think about your own face, you know you have a mouth, eyes, a nose, etc., but you don't have a photographic image in your mind. Your mind, then, does not need a complete inventory of facial details to view a simple drawing, such as a smiley face, as a face. Your mind understands what a face is conceptually, eliminating the need for ultra-realistic images. Think

about the art style in *Maus*. It is very minimalistic and high-contrast, drawn in black and white with simple, heavy lines. The drawings of the animal faces have less individual identity because of their lack of detail, which allows the characters to have more universal qualities.

McCloud argues that we can project our concepts of self onto simpler drawings much easier than detailed ones because we *all* have eyes and a mouth, whereas if there were additional facial features drawn, such as a mole on a nose or glasses, we can start to separate ourselves from the image. With just two dots and a curved line, the simple smiley face can become our own face in our minds. Spiegelman chose to use simple art in *Maus* intentionally to invite the reader to identify with the imagery -- to project themselves onto it. When the reader does this, they are more susceptible to the emotions of the story because the story isn't separate from themselves -- it's a part of them. If you look at the seventh panel on page 83, you can see the pure emotion that Vladek's wife, Anja, displays on her face when Vladek suggests that they send their son to hide with a friend to try to keep him safe during the war. When she says "I'll never give up my baby,

never!" you are able to feel the emotions present in the scene because the art style allows you to identify with the characters in an intimate way. Even though she's a mouse, Anja has a strong, human instinct in regards to her child.



The use animal allegory in *Maus* seems like it would separate the reader further from the story, but it doesn't because abstracting the characters into animals removes individual identity from them in a similar way that the simple art style does; in this way, the allegory actually allows the reader to relate to the characters



on a deeper level. If the characters were composed of realistic drawings of humans, it would be easier to think of the characters as people other than ourselves. When Spiegelman uses the minimalistic animal drawings, he's opening up the work for the reader to emotionally identify with it. A great example of the effectiveness of McCloud's theory about viewer-identification is on page 294, where Spiegelman includes an actual photo of Vladek, his father, in his work. When you encounter the photo in the final pages of the second book, you realize that this story is not your story -- it's the story of a real person. Spiegelman's use of the animal allegory, along with the simple art style, allows you to emotionally invest in the story, but the photo doesn't let you forget that that Vladek was a real human being who went through everything that you just experienced through Spiegelman's work.

Simplicity is key for communication in this work. Spiegelman's minimalistic drawings in *Maus* invite the reader to invest emotion into the story by universalizing the identity of the characters, allowing the reader to access the immense emotional turmoil associated with the Holocaust while simultaneously pointing out the problems with racism and anti-Semitism. On top of

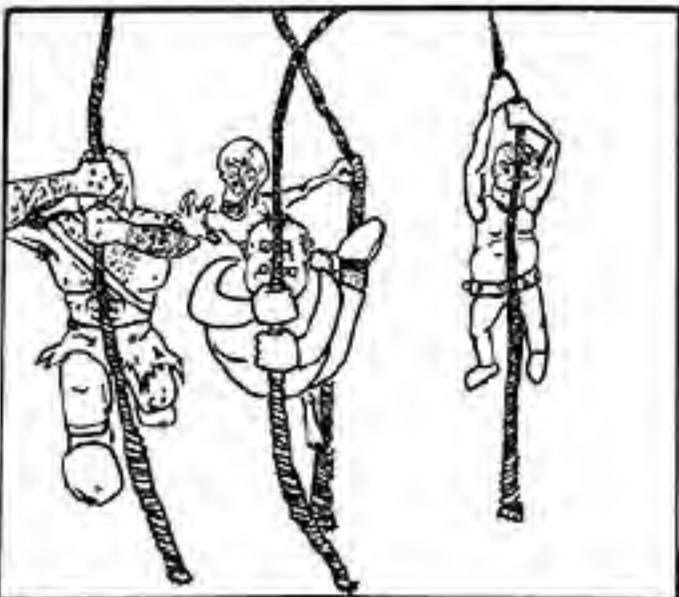
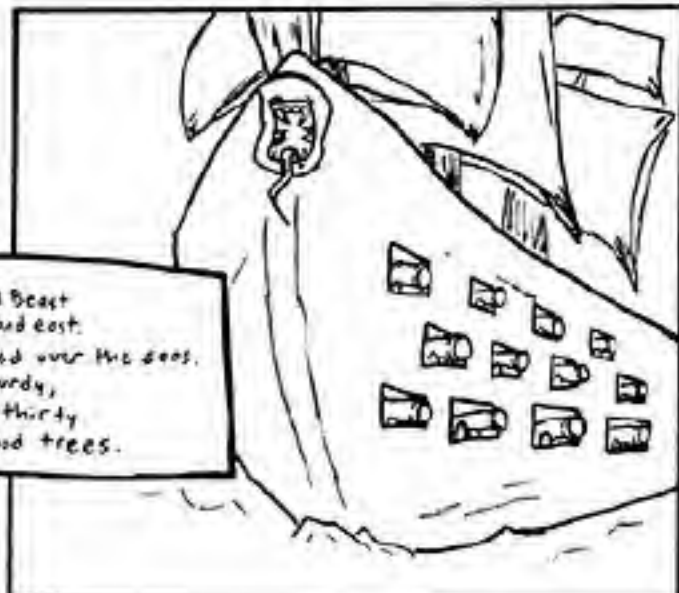
this, the narrative of Spiegelman's experience as a second-generation survivor, coupled with the narrative of his father's experience in the Holocaust, invites the reader to grasp the enormity of one of humanity's most tragic events in history. *Maus* uses the comic form purposefully so that the reader may participate in the overarching journey of navigating through the trauma of the Holocaust, in which the process of healing is never quite complete.

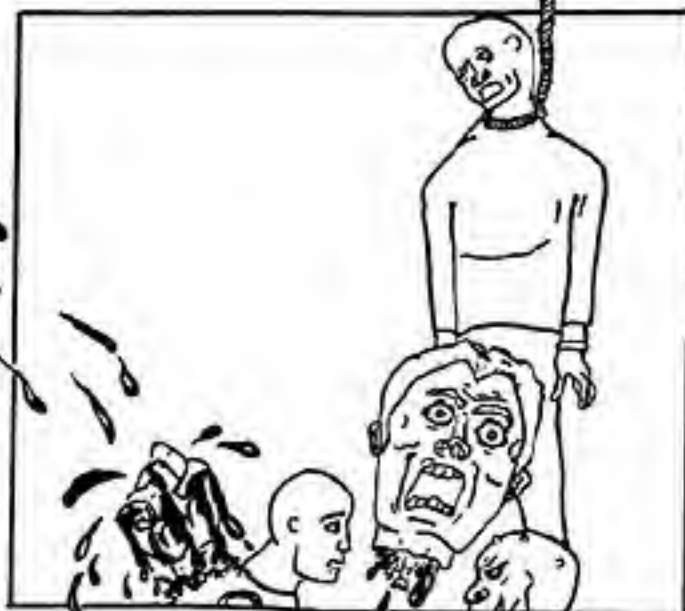
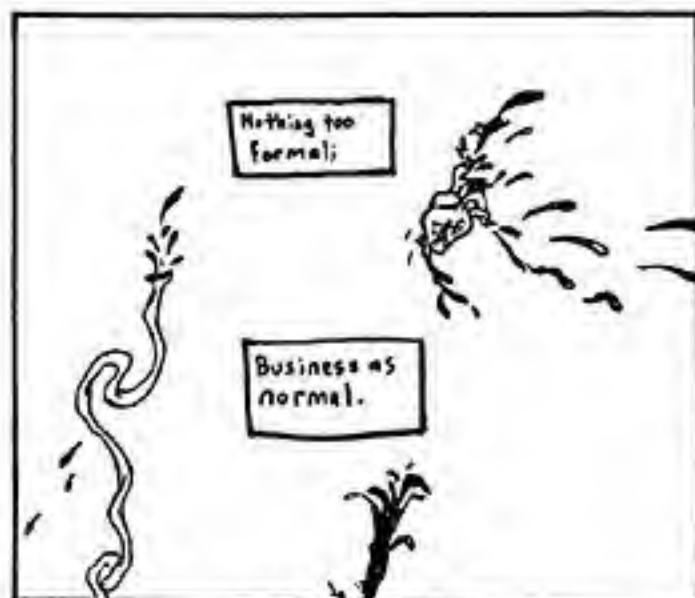


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- Spiegelman, Art. *The Complete Maus*. New York: Pantheon.

"Dread Captain Carmen" by Tyler Crisman













# PEOPLE OF UO

Meg Quinn

## "THE 8:00 AM STUDENT"



## THE "EVERY OTHER GIRL" GIRL



## THE SPORTS MARKETING MAJOR



## The Journalism Major



## THE STUDENT ATHLETE



## THE THEATRE MAJOR



## "THE RESIDENT ASSISTANT"



# The Luring of the Moth

by Aela Chicas-Cruz

























# BEHIND THE PANEL WITH JAN ELIOT

CREATOR OF *STONE SOUP*

INTERVIEW BY LOUIS CICALESE

**Art Ducko:** Can you tell me a little bit about your background and how you got started drawing comics?

**Jan Eliot:** I was complaining to a friend that I was bored because I didn't have a creative outlet, and she said, "I think you're really funny and I think you should try drawing cartoons." I had absolutely never thought of it before, although I grew up loving the Sunday funnies. I was a single mom with two kids, so I started doing cartoons about being overwhelmed and having too much to do and not enough time and patience. I really, almost immediately, fell in love with it.

**AD:** I've heard the story of how you got syndicated before and it's pretty remarkable, I think.

**JE:** In the early 80's I went to a conference in New York where I met a syndicate rep from the United Media, and she looked at my stuff, they sent me a contract. I was shocked and amazed—but it was an old-fashioned contract that is not used anymore, asking for the copyright. And I just thought I would negotiate out of that, but they just slammed the door in my face, basically saying, "You have no power to negotiate. You can take it or leave it."

So I left it, and it kind of broke my heart, and I quit cartooning for about five years and just did graphic design. But I remarried in '88 and since I wasn't the sole breadwinner anymore, I sort of thought maybe I had the psychic energy to try again. I got the *Register Guard* to give me a weekly spot. And after I'd been doing my weekly strips for six months I started sending them off to the only syndicate that I felt comfortable with, which was Universal Press. They were the ones who had syndicated *Cathy* and *For Better or For Worse*, *Calvin and Hobbes*, and *Doonesbury*,

and all the strips that I loved, so—I do not recommend this—but I just set my sights on this one syndicate and every six months, for four years, I sent them twenty-four new strips. Coming up to the fifth year, I'm getting old, and I'm like, "When in my life, when in my career is this going to happen?" And so I started writing, started defending my place in the marketplace. There was a new television show that was really successful called *Grace Under Fire*, and it was about a single mom, and one of the things that syndicates along the way had objected to was the single mom aspect of my strip, because King Features thought it was "depressing" and "nobody wants to read about divorce" and "shouldn't she have a boyfriend?"

**AD:** That's what's depressing.

**JE:** Right, that's what's depressing! So, I just started saying, "It's my time." I mean, fifty percent of people in the United States get divorced, so why wouldn't you write a comic? I mean, it's not even about divorce—that's just the background. So I sent a defense letter every three weeks to Universal Press with more reasons why it was my time. And lo and behold, they sent me a development contract and for six months I worked with them, doing twenty cartoons a month. It was just to see if I could generate more ideas and accept some criticism. The contract ended in December and I didn't hear anything. In March, my editor called me and she said, "They want to fly you out." And I said, "Well, why?" And she said, "Well I don't think it's to tell you 'no!'"

**AD:** Are there ever days when you think, "I really don't want to do a comic strip right now?"

**JE:** At least once a week. [Laughs.] The real secret to staying happy in this job is to be



enough ahead of deadline that, when you have *that* day, you can go take your boat to the lake or go shopping or see your friends.

But yeah, there're days when I don't have any ideas to start with, kind of brain dead, or things aren't great in my life. I had a period of time where my dad was still alive, but he had dementia and I had to help figure out how he was going to be cared for. Those couple of years I actually bought gags now and then, because it was just not a fun time. But it's also a muscle that you can build and it's easier for me now than it was twenty years ago.

**AD:** Do you think it's difficult being a woman in comic strips or is it a more even playing field than other industries?

**JE:** I think it has been really hard to be a woman. About ten years ago, the guy who does *Zits* told me that he thought that *Zits* was popular because it was about a boy and most editors are men and it just struck a chord. I mean, I like Jerry Scott very much and I didn't mind him saying that. I think he was just saying it how he saw it and I think he was right.

The men I met at King Features in the 80s—if you think of the word 'syndicate' and how it sounds like the Mafia—these guys looked like Mafia guys. I mean they're kind of big, and they have trench coats and hats, and they drink at lunch. They take you to restaurants that are dark during the middle of the day.

**AD:** It sounds terrifying.

**JE:** They were! And these were the guys who were saying, "Don't you think it's kind of sad that she's divorced? Don't you think she needs a boyfriend?" But it's changed a lot. And it seems to me like online is a level playing field. It has not been a level playing for women in comics. It's hard for women in animation. I think online you have the advantage of being in charge of the placement and your marketing, and you don't have to work in a world of other people deciding if you get airtime.

I don't generally do gender humor. I

don't do, "Back me up here, ladies," or "Guys are like that, yeah, they are." I live with a man who does his own laundry and cooks for me, and there are a lot of guys like that out in the world. And there are a lot of people out there who have relationships that are not based on gender roles. They're based on two people making their way in the world. But cartoons have been built on cliché.

When I first got syndicated, a whole bunch of comic writers bombarded me. The early cartoonists, the 50s and 60s guys—*Dennis the Menace* and all those guys—they all bought gags. There was a whole industry of people who silently wrote all the gags for the comic strips. But it's just what you'd think. It's a cliché of "Wally's waiting for Joan to get ready, she's always late for their date..." But that's not my world and we're not doing that. We're not writing that.

You can't win. If you're serious, you're bitchy. And if you have to flirt to get the guys to pay attention to you, that's degrading. But that's what they know. So I think it's been weird to be a woman in the industry to a certain extent, but it's definitely getting better, and I think in general the world's moving toward that all being better.

**AD:** Yes, ever so slowly.

**JE:** Ever so slowly. [Laughs.]

JAN ELIOT • STONE SOUP CARTOONS • USA

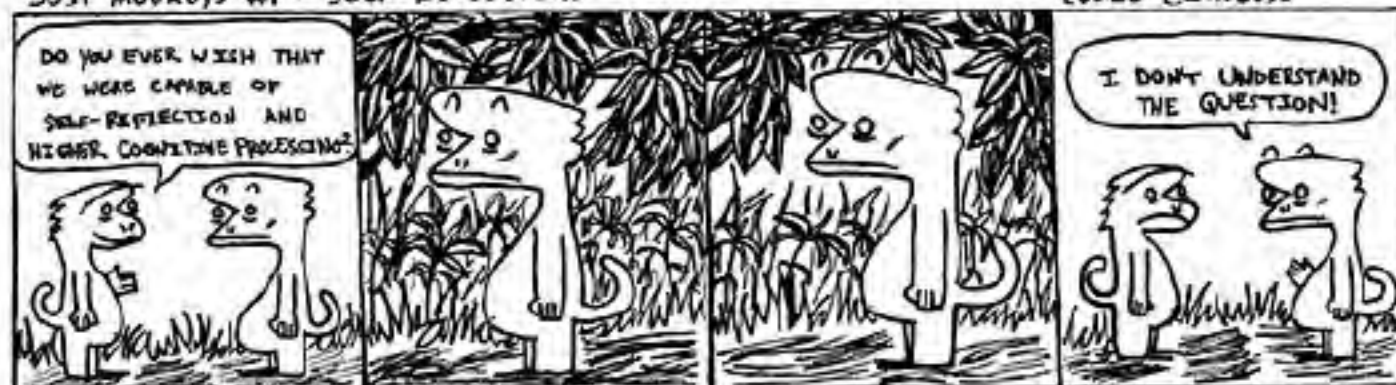


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# DEEP FRIED DUCK STRIPS

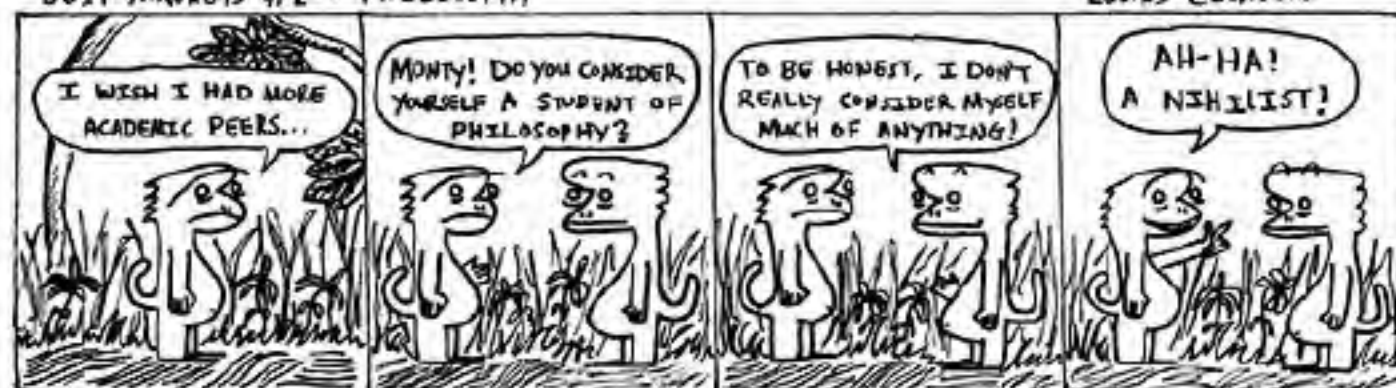
JUST MONKEYS #1: SELF-REFLECTION

LOUIS CICALISE



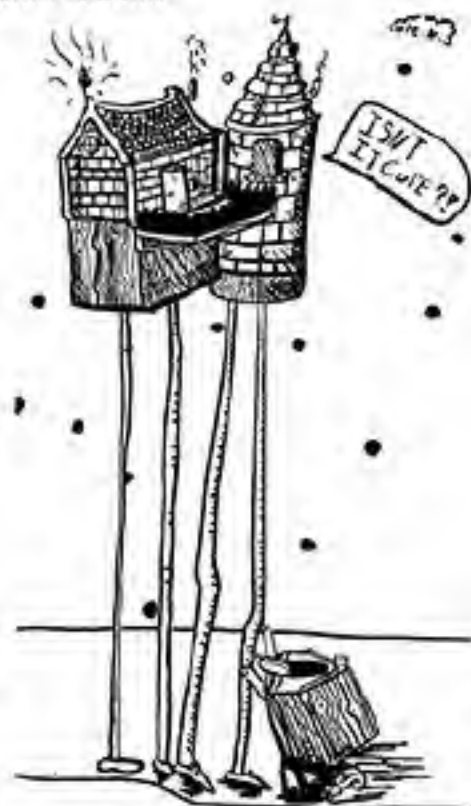
JUST MONKEYS #2: PHILOSOPHY

LOUIS CICALISE



ALEX MILSHTEN

COLE KASTNER





JESUS... CAN YOU GET THE BALL AGAIN?



"Keep 'em comin' Pop"

ART DUCKO  
VOLUME I - ISSUE II